Categorisation of Indian coal reserves

713. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) what is the scientific basis of categorisation of Indian coal reserves as inferior coal, when we have vast resources of good quality coal;

(b) whether it is a fact that coal quality deteriorates in open cast mining of nationalised coal sector because of the wrong method of mining in which parting band are not eliminated by adoption of easy process whereas all over the world parting bands are eliminated; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that the underground sectional mining is not being done because it is comparatively difficult method of mining and even the coal sector produces inferior variety of coal by adopting wrong mining method in underground coal mine?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) Indian non-coking coals are categrorised in grades A to G based on the useful heat value which depends upon ash and moisture content of coal. Coking coals are categrorised on the ash percentage in coal. According to Geological Survey of India (GSI) estimated D.E.F & G grades are over 52% of the proved and indicated reserves of non-coking coal in the country.

(b) In mechanised opencast mining, the mine plan generally provides for separation of bands which are thick enough to be extracted separately depending on the bucket size of the machine, thickness of the band. thickness of the coal seam and other related geo-mining parameters. In large scale operations in opencast mining bands which are erratic, thin and inconsistent get excavated alongwith coal.

(c) Sectional mining in underground mines which was being practised in pre-nationalisation days was mainly for selective exploitation of superior quality coal for better profitability. This practice was not conducive to conservation of coal resources.

Coal left over in the mines through selective process also leads to underground fires and other associated hazards. Therefore, while deciding upon a mining method all the related geo-mining conditions, techno-economic parameters, conservation and safety aspects are taken into account and based on technical feasibility efforts are always made to extract maximum thickness of a given seam.

Dankuni coal complex

714. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question No. 3490 given in the Rajya Sabha on 22nd August. 1994 and state:

(a) whether the product range not include apart from coal, gas and coke by-products like ammonium sulphate, tar chemicals and pure phenol cresols, xylerols etc.;

(b) whether the tar processing plant has been fully commissioned and if so, the details of the products and if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether ammonia removal section is in use and if so, the reasons for non-production of ammonium sulphate from this plant;

(d) the basis on which the damage Ministry had denied to the two batterie

(e) whether the retorts not constitute a part of the battery; and

(f) if so, whether it is a fact that in a report to the Director (Technical) of Coal India Limited in March, 1994

the General Manager of the Unit has admitted the clinkering and damaging of some of the retorts due to which the increase in demand of the gas could not be made with the existing retort benches?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) The main products of low temperature carbonisation plant are, gas and coke. Tar and other chemicals like ammonium sulphate, phenols cresols, xylenols etc. are termed as by-products.

(b) The bench distillation section of the tar distillation plant is under commissing. The bench distillation section could not be commissioned earlier because of non-avlaiability of sufficient steam due to low capacity operation of the plant on account of restricted off-take of gas.

(c) The ammonium sulphate section could not be commissioned due to development of leakage in the pipe line.

(d) to (f) Coal India Limited has reported that no damage of permanent nature had been noticed in retort benches No. 1 & 2. Only clinker formation at the bottom portion of some retorts was taking place resulting in drop in productivity. Some of the retorts have already been creaned out and put back into normal operation and other retors are under the process of cleaning of clinkers.

Expanding and Improving use of coal

715. SHRI ASHOK MITRA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the total outlay proposed in each year of the Eighth Five Year Plan period on research and development for the purpose of expanding and improving the use of coal as a source of energy; and

(b) whether Government have any proposal to increae such outlays serveral fold in view of the foreign exchange saving potential of domestic coal development programmes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) and (b) A total capital outlay of Rs. 87 crores had been envisaged during the Eighth Plan period (1992-97) on various applied Research and Development activities covering areas like production, productivity and safety, coal beneficiation, coal utilisation, environment and ecology etc.

During the first three years of the Eighth Plan (1992-95), Research and development projects with an outlay of about Rs. 55 crores have been sanctioned/taken up. For the balance two years of the Plan period, the allocation depends on the Annual Plan exercises based on the status of various Research & Development schemes taken up/proposed.

Mobile hospitals in the coalfields

716. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have introduced mobile hospitals in the Coalfields to provide emergency medical help to its employees;

(b) if so, the Coalfields of different States where such a system has been introduced; and

(c) the detailed norms and guidelines introduced therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Mobile Clinics have been introduced in Eastern Coalfields Ltd. (West Bengal, Bihar), Bharat Coking Coal Ltd. (Bihar & West Bengal),